

Summary

Forensic Handwriting Examination

The aim of this thesis is to introduce the Forensic handwriting examination as one of the disciplines of Forensic identification, to describe its methods and procedures, and to demonstrate them on specific examples. The aim of the practical part of the thesis is to apply the findings described in the theoretical part of the thesis to the handwriting examination carried out by the author of the thesis, to experimentally verify some of hypotheses presented in the thesis, such as the influence of various factors on the handwriting of an individual, and to examine the most frequent methods of deliberate alteration of one's handwriting.

The first chapter of the thesis is focused on the definition of the term “Handwriting Examination”, on a brief examination of the history of this branch of forensic science, and on the analysis of its relations to other fields of forensic science, especially to the graphology.

The following chapter describes the procedure of establishing one's handwriting habits, the influence of the Czech handwriting system taught to children, and some of the internal and external factors which influence one's handwriting.

The third chapter examines the major subject matters of handwriting examination, describes several specific attributes of letters, differentiates between the terms “questioned document”, and “standards of comparison” and analyses the relation of these terms to the criminal procedural law. Apart from that, this chapter focuses on the examination of signatures, which are nowadays of particular interest of forensic handwriting examination, and on the examination of deliberately altered handwriting.

The fourth chapter aims towards explaining the procedure of the handwriting examination per se and describes the methods and stages of the examination and some of the technical means used. This part focuses primarily on the new technical devices capable of facilitating the process which either have already been put into practice or are being introduced to forensic handwriting examination experts. The end of this chapter summarizes the pieces of information obtained from the police files provided by the District Attorney's Office of Ostrava.

The last chapter describes four experiments which have been carried out and their results. The first one is the author's own handwriting examination aimed at determining the authorship of a questioned document with the use of the methods described in this thesis. It is followed by the analysis of the influence of different writing positions on one's handwriting, the influence of alcoholic intoxication on one's handwriting, and by a statistical analysis of the most frequent means of intentional alteration of one's handwriting.